

3:24-mj-00032

AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA

COUNTY OF CABELL, to-wit:

I, Seth A. Summers, being duly sworn, hereby depose and state as follows:

I am a United States Postal Inspector employed with the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) since September 2012. I am presently assigned to the USPIS Charleston, WV domicile where my responsibilities include the investigation of crimes involving the United States Postal Service (USPS) and crimes furthered through the use of the U.S. Mail. This includes the investigation of mail theft, mail fraud, identity theft, burglaries, and robberies of post offices, in addition to the investigation of controlled substances sent through the U.S. Mail. Prior to my employment with the USPIS, I was employed as a Special Agent and as a Uniformed Division Officer with the United States Secret Service for approximately eight (8) years, with assignments in Washington, D.C. and Charleston, WV. During the course of my law enforcement career, I have investigated various other financial crimes, including wire fraud, bank fraud, money laundering, access device fraud, and counterfeiting.

This affidavit is made in support of an application for a search warrant to search the contents of a black 2023 Ford Mustang, Vehicle Identification Number: 1FA6P8CFXP5301124, bearing Ohio temporary registration Q514105, hereinafter referred to as the SUBJECT VEHICLE. The SUBJECT VEHICLE is currently in the custody of the Cabell County Sheriff's Office at the Ona Field Office, 2726 Howells Mill Road, Ona, Cabell County, West Virginia 25545, and within the Southern District of West Virginia.

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Because this affidavit is meant only to establish probable cause for the sought after warrant, it does not include every fact known to me as part of this investigation. The facts set forth in this affidavit are based on my own personal knowledge, knowledge obtained from other individuals during my participation in this investigation, including other law enforcement officers, interviews of victims, witnesses, a review of records related to this investigation, communications with others who have knowledge of the events and circumstances described herein, and information gained through my training and experience.

BACKGROUND OF INVESTIGATION

Since April 2024, the USPIS and the Cabell County Sheriff's Office have been investigating JASON RICHARD YOCHUM (hereinafter "YOCHUM") and others for violations of, among other offenses, 18 U.S.C. § 1708 (Mail Theft), 18 U.S.C. § 1344 (Bank Fraud), and 18 U.S.C. § 1029 (Access Device Fraud).

On April 24, 2024, your affiant and Deputy W. Hash, Cabell County Sheriff's Office, interviewed individual A.P. who reported having ordered checks and two (2) new debits cards for two (2) accounts held by A.P. with City National Bank. The checks and debit cards were ordered by A.P. at the beginning of April 2024 and were to be delivered by U.S. Mail to her home address located in the East Pea Ridge area of Huntington, West Virginia. A.P. reported that she has yet to receive the debit cards and checks in the mail. A.P. reported that on April 15, 2024, she was alerted by City National Bank employees that someone attempted to deposit two (2) altered checks into one (1) of her accounts using the ATM at City National Bank University Branch, 1751 Fifth Avenue, Huntington, WV 25703. A.P. suspects the debit cards were stolen from the mail, activated, and subsequently used to conduct unauthorized deposit and withdrawal transactions on her

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two (2) accounts. A.P. voluntarily provided your affiant printouts of bank statements and transaction details which reflect the unauthorized deposit and withdrawal transactions. A review of the bank records revealed that between April 12, 2024, and April 16, 2024, two (2) altered checks in the amount \$612.00 and \$741.46, respectively, were deposited into A.P.'s accounts. The majority of the funds totaling \$1,063.59 were withdrawn on the same date of deposit by way of large ATM withdrawals, which occurred at various locations in Barboursville and Huntington, Cabell County, West Virginia. Your affiant located and interviewed the original issuers of the two (2) checks and confirmed that the original checks had been altered and the payee's name changed to A.P. Your affiant further confirmed that these two (2) checks were either mailed from or destined to addresses in the East Pea Ridge area of Huntington, West Virginia.

Bank surveillance photos from City National Bank show an unidentified white male making the unauthorized deposit transactions on A.P.'s accounts. Surveillance video obtained from Walmart and Becca Lynns, two (2) business locations where the unauthorized ATM withdrawal transactions from A.P.'s accounts occurred, show two (2) white males accompanying each other. One (1) of the white males was later identified through vehicle registration records, West Virginia driver's license photograph, and prior Cabell County Sheriff's Office booking photographs as YOCHUM.

SUBJECT VEHICLE

The SUBJECT VEHICLE was purchased on April 25, 2024, by a person whose identity is unknown at this time from Nourse Chillicothe Automall, located at 423 N Bridge St. Chillicothe, Ohio 45601. The unknown person used the means of identification of individual S.H. to apply for and obtain financing from Huntington National Bank to purchase the SUBJECT VEHICLE. The total amount financed was approximately

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\$52,988.71. The SUBJECT VEHICLE is currently registered in the name of S.H. Your affiant and Deputy W. Hash, Cabell County Sheriff's Office, interviewed S.H., who is a current resident of Huntington, West Virginia, who advised he was alerted to this fraudulent activity on May 8, 2024, after receiving correspondence from Huntington National Bank, which stated he owed a \$800 car payment. S.H. subsequently filed a report with the West Virginia State Police and contacted the Nourse Chillicothe Automall and the Chillicothe Police Department. The Chillicothe Police Department entered the SUBJECT VEHICLE in NCIC as being a stolen vehicle. S.H. further explained to your affiant that the individual who purchased the SUBJECT VEHICLE used an old Ohio driver's license, which S.H. utilized prior to the issuance of his West Virginia driver's license in January 2024.

On May 14, 2024, YOCHUM was identified by officers with the Huntington Police Department as driving the SUBJECT VEHICLE. YOCHUM fled from officers in the SUBJECT VEHICLE as they attempted to approach him in the drive-thru of the Pioneer Appalachia Federal Credit Union, 416 Main Street, Huntington, West Virginia 25702. Employees at Pioneer Appalachia Federal Credit Union had earlier called 9-1-1 and reported a suspect in the SUBJECT VEHICLE was attempting to cash a check in the amount of \$7,400 using the name of S.H. and had provided S.H.'s Ohio driver's license to the Pioneer Appalachia Federal Credit Union employees. The Ohio driver's license in the name of S.H. was left behind by YOCHUM as he fled the area.

Continuing on May 14, 2024, Deputy Richmond, with the Cabell County Sheriff's Office, responded to the area of 350 Blue Bird Lane along Little 7 Mile Road in Huntington, WV 25702 for the report of an abandoned car in the woods. Deputy Richmond located the SUBJECT VEHICLE and confirmed that the same had been

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entered into NCIC as a stolen vehicle by the Chillicothe Police Department. The SUBJECT VEHICLE was towed to the Cabell County Sheriff's Office, Ona Field Office, where it is currently located.

On May 15, 2024, your affiant responded to the Cabell County Sheriff's Office, Ona Field Office, and observed the SUBJECT VEHICLE. Your affiant noted the SUBJECT VEHICLE bore Vehicle Identification Number 1FA6P8CFXP5301124 and an Ohio Temporary Registration Q51410, which was affixed to the inside of the rear windshield. Your affiant further noted the SUBJECT VEHICLE displayed a rear dealer license plate insert which reflected the name "Nourse.com Chillicothe Automall Chillicothe, OH". While standing outside the SUBJECT VEHICLE and looking through the rear driver's side window, your affiant observed, in plain view, documents consistent in appearance with mail items on the rear passenger seat.

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Based on the information contained herein, your affiant maintains there is probable cause to believe evidence of a crime, contraband, fruits of crime, or other items illegally possessed, and property designed for use, intended for use, or used in committing a crime is located within the SUBJECT VEHICLE. The above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.

Further your affiant sayeth naught.



SETH A. SUMMERS
POSTAL INSPECTOR

On the 22nd day of May 2024, this affidavit was sworn to by the affiant, who did no more than attest to its contents pursuant to Crim. R. 4.1 (b)(2)(A), by telephone after a document was transmitted by email, per Crim. R. 4.1.



CHERYL A. EIFERT
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE